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Lower Tokai Meeting

SANParks Cape Research Centre

19 July 2016

Attendance:

SANParks: Gavin Bell, Monique Ruthenberg, Michael Slayen, Chad Cheney, Hilton, Candice Freeman, Merle Collins

City of Cape Town: Julia Wood, Pat Holmes, Liz Brunette (Ward Councillor)

Civic Society & NGO: Errol Kohn (TRA), Henk Egberink (Treekeepers), Dirk Muller (Botanical Society), Deon De Villiers (Tokai MTB), Mark Smith (Tokai MTB), Constantia Hills Residents Association, Jenny Cullinan (Bee Researcher), Karen Sternberg (Ujubee Research), Berta van Rooyen (FOTP), Jasper Slingsby (SAEON), George Louw (CNW), Geoff Fox (Wynberg CPF), Ian Basset (TNCW & CUWA), Clare Burgess (Treekeepers), Tony Rebello (SANBI), James Forsythe (Friends of Constantia Green Belts), Tessa Oliver (Kishigu, NPC, Fynbos Forum Chair), Zoe Poulsen, Pierre Gallagher (CPFPA)

Apologies: Anthony Hitchcock, Grant Chapman and Rupert Koopman

1. Welcome by Gavin Bell

Purpose of meeting – Opportunity to engage with and update stakeholders about plans for Tokai

2. Introductions - by all

3. Background presentations

Background to Tokai Plantation - Mike Slayen (TMNP Manager: Planning)

Tokai and Cecilia are located within a designated nature area – the Cape Peninsula Protected Natural Environment (CPPNE) and when the TMNP was established the government agreed that that the conservation worthy land within the CPPNE be incorporated into the TMNP over time. To this end DWAF has assigned, by government gazette, the 20 year lease with MTO to SANParks/ TMNP.

Tokai (and Cecilia) are commercial plantations established to provide timber. They comprise 1000 ha of state owned land under DWAF control then managed by a parastatal SAFCOL and MTO. The decision to phase out commercial plantations on the Peninsula was not made by SANParks but by the Government in 1999 (uneconomical and unsustainable). The trees are not being removed as part of an alien clearing program; they are being harvested on a commercial basis. Furthermore, the trees are not being harvested by SANParks but by a private company, MTO Forestry, which was awarded the public tender by the then Dept. of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) in 2004. As part of the tender process, MTO Forestry purchased the trees from Government and has a 20-year lease with DWAF, in terms of which they harvest the plantation trees. This is a contractually binding, irreversible legal commitment. The clear felling of the plantation compartments is o-going in terms of the lease but has been accelerated due to the 2015 fires in the Tokai plantation. Once the trees in a compartment are harvested by MTO Forestry, that portion is then transferred to SANParks management.

A public stakeholder and authority engagement process was initiated by SANParks in 2006 regarding the rehabilitation of the areas and future plans for the plantation areas and included the City of CT Mayor's roundtable process. The Tokai and Cecilia Management Framework successfully achieves the compromise many have called for and addresses the biodiversity, heritage, recreation, eco-tourism challenges. The Management Framework is being implemented on an on-going basis and the proposal for planting of 'transition' areas is being



monitored and assessed for the planning of these areas. Progress to date wrt the plan includes the following planning and implementation – CRC established, Tokai Manor precinct plan, braai site landscape plan, biodiversity restoration plans, rehabilitation and planting plans (ongoing), recreational plans, Prinskasteel and wetland source to sea, existing infrastructure and appropriate use assessed. On-going- management plan for historic trees, 'transition' areas planning, Arboretum plan given impact of 2015 fire).

Tokai biodiversity (Tokai listed as a top 20 core conservation sites in CT - 104 species of plants threatened with extinction). Cape Flat Sand Fynbos (critically endangered), mid-slope Granite fynbos (critically endangered), transitions (silcrete zone), mountain Sandstone Fynbos.

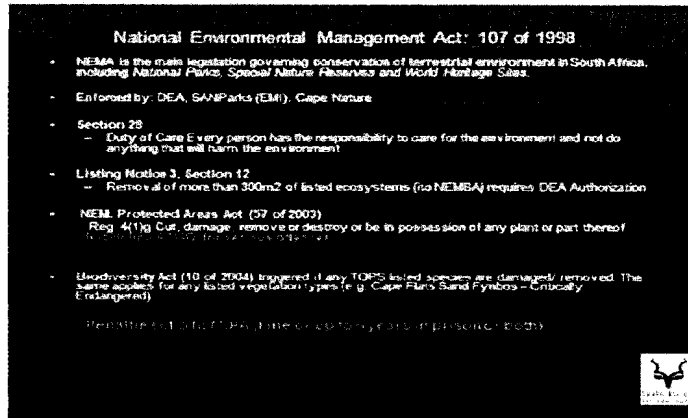
Parkscape in Lower Tokai - Jasper Slingsby

Parkscape.org.za & Tokaipark.org.za. Highlighting failures of SANParks. Vision of the group. Mission (to create open shaded and safe recreation area using indigenous plantings for all - ramblers, dog walkers, horse riders, mountain bikers, families including trails and paths)

Questions - Who will pay, Business model, Does visibility = safety, Indigenous trees in deep sand, Great belief in sustained volunteerism, What if it fails – who picks up the pieces

TMNP - A park for all forever? A closed book and disinterested to point of being hostile. Where is the public engagement. This is a great opportunity for public engagement, education and winning support. Where and when were the public meetings. Google search for TMNP and or Tokai management plan? People find fires and crime traumatic – TMNP need to engage pro-actively. Compromise vs collaboration. Best of both worlds solution? Restore where feasible and "garden" where not. Encourage community involvement in restoration, mng and policing. Biodiversity conservation and public amenity with education and outreach and & climate change adaptation and fire protection. How different will their plan look to TMNP?

Applicable Legislation – Monique Ruthenberg, Section Ranger



Law Enforcement, Lower Tokai Candice Freeman, Field Ranger

Illegal occupancy (social issue, fires, litter): The Tokai Field staff need to check the integrity of the area to ensure that illegal squatting does not take place.

Community radio received for TMNP Tokai: We received this radio on 4 May 2016 from the Constantia Valley Watch Association to help assist should we need help from Neighbourhood watches. There are currently 650 users on this radio including SAPS Kirstenhof, Diep River and Wynberg. The association is also able to assist in reading number plates.

Daily patrols (morning/afternoons): The field staff patrol the lower Tokai area daily

Weekly activity permit checks:

Safety awareness: education to the public such as not walking alone and to walk in groups.

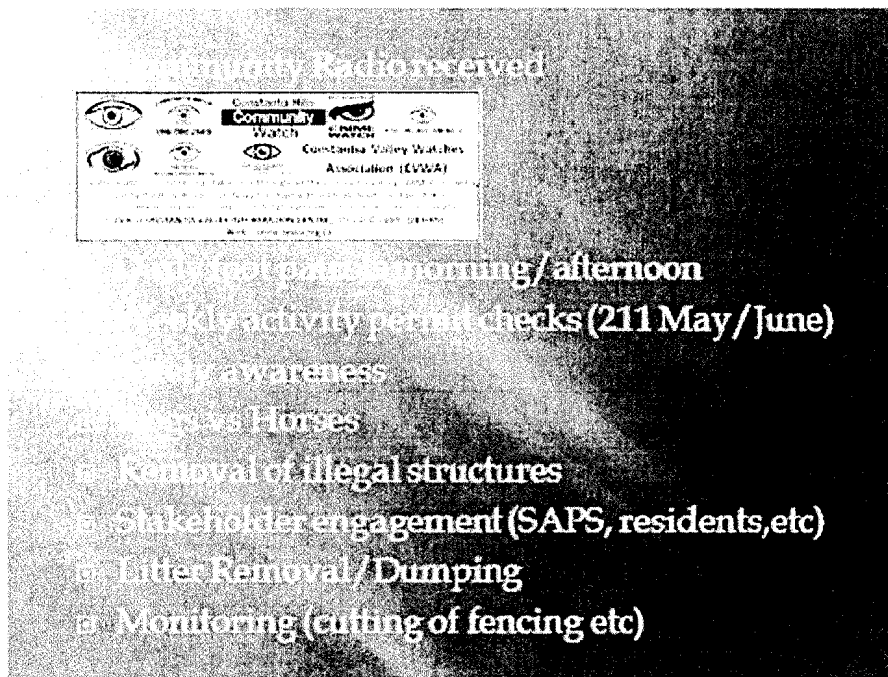
Dogs off leash vs Horses: continuous problem with dogs chasing horses and dog walkers not adhering to the dog walking code of conduct.

Removal of illegal structures: such as wood stacking against the pines, this could serve as a hiding spot for criminals or a fire hazard.

Stakeholder engagement (SAPS and residents): this is vitally important to engage with the people living in the neighbourhood to tip us off should they see anything out of place.

Litter removal & dumping: Illegal dumping takes place often – the field staff patrol hotspot areas such as bloukom laan, soetvlei avenue and bosdorp.

Monitoring (cutting of fences): fence patrols take place every week especially the Tokai picnic and fencing in the lower Tokai park that is closed off for veld re-habilitation.



TMNP Visitor Safety and Security - Hilton Blumeris, Snr. Section Ranger Visitor Safety

Crime timelines - all hours , Hotspots and risk analysis (Devils peak – 19%, Tokai – 6%, Rhodes - 19%, Kommetjie – 19%, Signal Hill – 12%, Sandy Bay 25%). K9 Unit - 13 dogs, 58 permanent rangers, 13 dog handlers, Team responds through Park, multiple SAPS stations, sit on CPF, Table Mountain Safety Forums, Whatsapp groups.

Lower Tokai Biodiversity - Tony Rebello - TMNP HR, Friends of Tokai, Arboretum group, SANBI)

From 2010 assessment - 104 species of plants threatened with extinction, Ecologically viable with minimum management, Large enough to be maintained as a natural ecosystem, Cape flat sand fynbos (critically endangered), Granite fynbos (critically endangered), Transitions (silcrete zone), Mountain (sandstone) fynbos. How to restore or save - passive approach – seed banks in place – let it grow. Clear fell exotics. Burn for fynbos. More than 350 species coming up in L Tokai alone – as many as in the Kalahari NP. Tokai been

under 3 x 30 year plantation cycles. At its limit now. At minimum viable populations – need at least 3 fire cycles to restore. Groups of plants that will need to be actively replanted and restored: canopy seed bearing – Protea, Leucadendron, Brunia & wetlands species. Confine planting to the Purcell list (originally have over 800 species) – occurring in the area naturally. Bring in seed from local area, find nearest natural population that is left. Planting are not always successful, dry summers do impact heavily on success. 3 extinct species have been brought back successfully already. Focus on the fynbos structures being brought back, not just specific species

4. Comments and Discussions

Cllr. Liz Brunette - Appreciate presentations etc. we need to look at where we came from and then move forward. Need to revisit the Management Framework and present to communities again as much time has lapsed.

Clare Burgess - Interest in tree management especially in residential areas, Tokai Arboretum Management Plan urgently needed. Need a Friends of Tokai Arboretum to become active. Engage with local people who use it. Be more open to public engagement. Management Framework requires conservation of heritage aspects – sense that heritage is lowest priority on the list. Suggest thinking out the box – eg California Redwoods have survived the fire. Consider red woods in buffer areas, not pines as an example. SANParks need to raise heritage resources priorities

GB: Arboretum – heritage site. Closed only due to post fire safety issues, initial assessments with SANBI and Dept. of Forestry.

Berta van Rooyen – we all know fynbos recognized by UNESCO, it is a cultural/ heritage marker. Heritage legislation (SA – international treaties signed). Look at what was published in history, what was the historic vegetation. What is NB, the plantation area form part of a fynbos regulated program of the Dutch East India Company. Arboretum is the historical marker for the forestry industry. Attempt from 1860 already made from other areas in SA. Can represent the Tokai Forestry in the Arboretum.

Tessa Olivier – issues that came to mind when thinking about Tokai - baboon management, fire management (it is a park – there will always be risks especially on border of residential areas). If you want to change land-use, there are laws that govern this. If anyone wishes to change the way the landscape structure (Conservation Legislation, Assessments, Heritage Legislation etc.)

Tony Rebello - There are urban parks (shaded areas) within residential areas, city parkscapes, green belts etc. Focus these for parkscapes, not the National Park.

Mike Slayen - These are good alternatives and this was pointed out to the City (e.g. Firgrove). They are easily accessible, less legislative restrictions etc.

Jasper Slingsby - Issue is people want to access places close to their home, not drive to a place.

Pat Holmes - International important biodiversity – we cannot have all the activities that have an impact.

Jasper Slingsby - There will always be conflict with different groups.

Dirk Muller - Fire accelerated a number of things. A big issue at the moment is the establishing wattles and other invasive plants.

Chad Cheney: alien clearing plan in place, WfW – delays due to contractor contract issues. Teams started about 2 weeks ago. Some expected delays with winter.



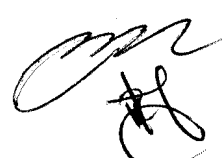
Berta van Rooyen. Even before establishment of the Park, there were deaths in Tokai. One incident – 2 kids killed by tree branches falling. There are other incidents. Why use crime as a reason to create a parkscape?

Mike Slayen: There is an election year and this needs to be considered.

Zoe Poulsen - need positive PR about the Park and restoration of fynbos etc. Perception is you can put fynbos anywhere but this is not the case. It is important to put right message out there.

Deon De Villiers: SANParks image out in public is that Park don't listen or engage.

Gavin Bell thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 12:55

A handwritten signature in black ink, located in the bottom right corner of the page. The signature is stylized and appears to be a combination of initials and a surname.